

President Lyndon Johnson once found himself in a situation just like this where he was receiving wonderful praise. His response was to stand up and smile and say Thank you all for your wonderful comments. I deeply wish my parents were here to share in this moment. My father would have enjoyed what you have so generously said about me, and my mother would have believed it!

In the Bible it says that there is a time and a season for everything, and I believe that. The time was right for many of the things that we accomplished in the last five years, and now the time is right for new leadership at the Library of Michigan.

But I can't leave without a little reminiscing ..

- I so enjoyed visiting libraries and I never knew what to expect. I'll never forget visiting the public library in Glennie and being greeted by the staff and the board all in full costume, dressed like their favorite literary mystery characters.
- And just in case my head gets too big, I'll always remember the library I visited with Dave Simmons; the librarian looked surprised and a little annoyed when I came in. Said she didn't have time for visits from bureaucrats and told me to look around if I wanted to but she was busy. Actually, I really could understand her point of view!
- One of my proudest accomplishments has been the part we played in helping a number of our staff go to library school. You guys are our future and I'm so proud of those of you for taking advantage of the educational opportunity we offered. Andrew, Bernie, Kevin, Kate, Sonya — you'll be great librarians.
- I always remember being so naive as to walk into Gale headquarters and announce that the Library of Michigan was their library and they needed to help us with stuff. It's amazing that they didn't kick me out! Instead it was the beginning of one of the finest corporation and library partnership in the country.
- And I'll never forget my friends the Coops and all they have put up with. They really were the oomph behind the road shows that we did for two years. What a memory to see Jim Seidl wearing a crown, Ann Holt as a caped avenger and Eileen Palmer as a princess. And Roger Mendel, my friend, who always knew just when to send me a really bad blonde joke.
- And thinking about the road show, who can forget Sheryl Mase — that silly mOOS! Or Randy Dykhuis as the handsome woodsman. I

should apologize to Randy .I always treated him like my little brother, which probably wasn't always nice. We'd dress him up for road show, I'd write his words to say, and I always liked to tell him what to do. And sometimes he'd do it. I think a low point in our relationship for Randy was the time we were traveling together and he was mistaken for my chauffeur. Seriously, I owe so much of our success to Randy.

- My board members were always there for me too. David Tate and Tom Moore worked so hard to get the best for the library during the transition to HAL. If it were not for these two individuals, this department would be called HAC. Seriously.
- And board members who have supported me personally as well as professionally — Bettina Graber, Elaine Logan and Elaine Didier, Fran Pletz, Barbara Bonge. And so many others.
- And Cliff, my current board president, who bought me breakfast one morning and got more than ham and eggs — he got a new project! We planned several cooperative ventures -including the joint online catalog- over those breakfasts.
- And then there is the HAL staff — Robin, Janet, Naomi, Paul Groll and others who were instrumental to the growth of the Library of Michigan before HAL. And Mark Hoffman — who I will miss so much. I always looked forward to our discussions — he is a most complex man — a genealogist, author, scholar and the shrewdest political operator I've ever met. Someday he will see the light, embrace Frisbees and vote Democratic.
- And Bill Anderson — another very complex man. You will find that current events are not his forte - ask him if he has heard that Brad and Jenn have split up and he will look clueless - but meaningful things, people, historical things that's what enthralls him. He can cite passages verbatim from civil war soldiers letters. Bill has been a mentor, a friend, and a role model. On Christmas Eve he took time from his family to contact me and give me encouragement. I will never forget him.
- And of course my staff. Jenny Sipe who guarded my door like a bulldog — she always read my moods, always made me laugh and always cared.
- And Elaine Harrison who always had the rotten job of giving me bad news about what was happening on the front lines of the library. She carried messages to me like we kicked out this group because they were rowdy ; or CB, we kicked out a couple who were doing it on

4th floor . What a fun job. Actually, Elaine always rose to the occasion with calmness and good will and was instrumental in the progress made in the library of Michigan. She has a tremendous ability to work with people and encourage them to do their finest.

- And Sheryl — who worked with me through so many projects that we couldn't keep track of them. She's the one with brains and the forthrightness who turned so many of my ideas into reality. I can't say enough about that silly MOOS.
- And Nancy — who never shied away from work and took on more and more and more. With grace, and style and intelligence. For the first three promotions, she insisted that she retain the work of the rare book librarian. I haven't heard her say that since this recent promotion to interim state librarian. She is a leader and a friend, and one of the reasons I can leave the LM with confidence, knowing that it is in excellent hands.

There are stories about so many more too — think of all we've been through the last 5 years! Our time in the Legislative Council and that cast of characters, the evolution of the Department of HAL, the events of 9/11, the blackout of 2003, the launch of the new MeL and Melcat .I could go on and on. And I view all the things we've accomplished as mere springboards to even better library service — to a future in which libraries figure prominently in Michigan and are well funded as well as well regarded.

I'll never forget Michigan. In fact, I met with some Kansans the other day. They asked where in Topeka I was going to live and you know what I did? (hold hand up like Michigan).

Anyway, it's time to close this, and I thought I'd close with a quote from Calvin and Hobbes in which Calvin says: It's a magical world, Hobbes ole buddy. Let's go exploring!!

Never forget to look ahead, to achieve the best, to dream and to explore. Thank you all for the best five years ever.